
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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SOUTHEAST COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB FISHING SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT

Petersburg . . . The 2011/2012 commercial Tanner crab fishery in Southeast Alaska will open by regulation at 12:00 noon on **Thursday, February 16, 2012**, as announced in a previous news release dated December 27, 2011. The registration deadline for the Tanner crab fishery is Tuesday, January 17, 2012.

Season length of the Tanner crab fishery will be determined by guidelines set forth in the Registration Area A Tanner crab harvest strategy [5 AAC 35.113]. The initial period of the commercial Tanner crab fishing season in the core areas and non-core areas will be at least five days in length. Additional fishing days may be allowed based on the number of registered pots at the start of the fishery [5 AAC 35.113(b)(1)]. A news release will be issued on February 16, 2012 announcing the total number of pots registered in the fishery for the 2011/2012 season and whether extra fishing time will be provided during the initial period. At the end of the initial period, the core areas will close to fishing, and the non-core areas will remain open for an additional five days.

5 AAC 35.113. Registration Area A Tanner crab harvest strategy

- (a) In Registration Area A, the minimum stock threshold for a commercial Tanner crab fishery is 2,300,000 pounds of mature male Tanner crab, measured by one-half of the long-term average (1997 - 2007) of mature male abundance. If the estimated abundance of mature male Tanner crab is below 2,300,000 pounds, the commercial Tanner crab fishery will remain closed.
- (b) The department shall manage the commercial Tanner crab fishery under a harvest strategy in which the commissioner, by emergency order, opens and closes fishing periods as follows:
 - (1) the initial period of the commercial Tanner crab fishing season in the core areas and non-core areas will be at least five days in length, and may be increased with additional fishing days allowed based on the estimated biomass of mature male crab and the number of registered pots at the start of the fishery, as follows:

Pots Registered	Additional Fishing Days	
	If the mature biomass is at least 2,300,000 pounds, but less than 5,500,000 pounds	If the mature biomass is 5,500,000 pounds or greater
1,600 - 2,399	4 additional days	5 additional days
2,400 - 3,199	3 additional days	4 additional days
3,200 - 3,999	2 additional days	3 additional days
4,000 - 4,799	1 additional day	2 additional days
4,800 - 5,599	1 additional day	2 additional days
5,600 - 6,399	0 additional days	1 additional day
6,400 - 7,000	0 additional days	1 additional day

(2) at the end of the initial period, the core areas will close to fishing, and the non-core areas will remain open for an additional five days.

(c) For the purposes of this section,

(1) "core areas" includes the following waters in Registration Area A:

(A) Icy Strait: waters west of a line from Point Sophia to 58°14.00' N. lat., 135°16.00' W. long., including the waters of Port Frederick and Excursion Inlet, and waters east of Section 14-A, including the waters of Glacier Bay not closed by the National Park Service;

(B) St. James Bay: waters west of a line from Point Whidbey to 58°33.00' N. lat., 135°09.60' W. long.;

(C) District 15: waters east of a line from the north tip of Little Island to Point St. Mary, including Berners Bay;

(D) Section 11-A: waters of Section 11-A in Stephens Passage;

(E) Section 11-B: waters north of line from Point Arden to Circle Point and east of a line from Point Arden to Point Bishop, including all waters of Taku Inlet;

(F) Seymour Canal: waters north of 57°37.00' N. lat.;

(G) Port Snettisham: waters east and north of a line from Point Styleman to Point Anmer;

(H) Endicott Arm and Tracy Arm: waters east of a line from Point Coke to Point Astley;

(I) Gambier Bay: waters west of a line from Point Gambier to 57°24.90' N. lat., 133°53.00' W. long.;

(J) Pybus Bay: waters north and west of a line from Point Pybus to the easternmost tip of San Juan Island to a point at 57°14.60' N. lat., 134°07.30' W. long.;

(K) Section 13-C, excluding Sitkoh Bay;

(L) Keku Strait, Port Camden and associated bays: waters southeast of a line from Cornwallis Point at 56°55.91' N. lat., 134°16.42' W. long. to Point McCartney at 57°01.49' N. lat., 134°03.51' W. long. and west of a line from Point Camden at 56°48.66' N. lat., 133°52.79' W. long. to Salt Point Light at 56°50.68' N. lat., 133°52.02' W. long.;

(M)Frederick Sound: waters east of a line from Bay Point to Boulder Point including Farragut Bay, Thomas Bay, Section 8-A, and Section 8-B, and north and east of a line from Mitchell Point to Point St. John, including Kah Sheets Bay, Duncan Canal, and Wrangell Narrows;

- (2) "non-core areas" includes those portions of districts in Registration Area A that are not described in (1) of this subsection.

Stock Status

Catch-survey modeling of the 2010/2011 fishery and October 2011 survey data produced a regional biomass estimate of 3.12 million pounds of mature male Tanner crab. This compares to a mature male Tanner crab biomass estimate of 2.89 million pounds from the previous year.

District 16

As in past seasons, District 16 will be open and managed as a 'non-core' area for the 2011/2012 season to test for stock recovery. This district had been managed as part of the Yakutat Tanner crab fishery, which was designated as 'collapsed and recovering' by the Alaska Board of Fisheries beginning in January 2000. Areas within District 16 were briefly opened to test for stock recovery beginning during the 2003/2004 season. No effort in District 16 occurred during similar openings since the 2003/2004 season.

Closed Area Descriptions

The department reminds fishermen that a National Park Service Lifetime Access Permit (LAP) is required to fish for Tanner crab in waters of Glacier Bay north of a line from Point Carolus to Point Gustavus. Within this area, some waters are closed; these are: the Beardslee Islands, the Hugh Miller/Charpentier Inlet complex, and upper Dundas Bay wilderness areas, and the non-wilderness areas Geikie Inlet, the West Arm of Glacier Bay proper north of 58°50.00 N. lat., and the East Arm of Glacier Bay proper north of a line drawn from Point Caroline, through the southern end of Garforth Island to the east side of Muir Inlet. These areas are shown on the attached map. For more information on fishing in Glacier Bay proper, including detailed latitudes and longitudes of closures, fishermen must contact the National Park Service at (907) 697-2230.

Registration

Commercial fishermen may register at Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Wrangell, and Haines ADF&G area offices. The registration deadline for the 2011/2012 season is **January 17, 2012**. All commercial fishermen registering in the 2011/2012 Tanner crab fishery after the registration deadline will be required to pay a \$45 late fee [A.S. 16.05.065]. Simultaneous, though separate, registrations are allowed for Tanner crab and golden king crab. Commercial shrimp or Dungeness crab pot registrations may also be obtained and fished simultaneously with Tanner crab, if the appropriate seasons are open at the same time [5 AAC 35.128(b)]. Processors are reminded that registration for tenders is required.

Logbooks are mandatory for all pot fishing vessels participating in the Tanner crab fishery. Logbook packets, buoy tags, and other related materials are currently available. Logbook packets include instructions for filling out the logbooks, logbook sheets, envelopes for their delivery, maps showing ADF&G statistical areas, and all news releases available at the time the packet is obtained.

Buoy tag placement is addressed in 5 AAC 35.126(a). Buoy tags are mandatory for all commercial Tanner crab gear and are available in any area office in Southeast Alaska for \$1.25 each. Replacement tags are available at all area offices upon receipt of a completed tag replacement affidavit. **All missing tag numbers must be provided on the affidavit form before replacements can be issued.** The completed affidavit form must be signed by the permit holder and a crewmember.

concurrently. For vessels participating in both fisheries concurrently, once a vessel is unregistered for Tanner crab the additional 20 stickers may be obtained to fish the full complement of 100 pots for golden king crab. Pots and rings may not be fished simultaneously from the same vessel [5 AAC 35.106(b)].

In-water gear storage is allowed for five days following the season closure for Tanner crab in any portion of Registration Area A [5 AAC 35.127(a)(2)]. Following the regionwide season closure for Tanner crab in Registration Area A, in-water gear storage is allowed for seven days [5 AAC 35.127(a)(1)].

A person or vessel that operates pots or ring nets for commercial, subsistence, personal use or sport purposes during the 30 days immediately before the scheduled opening date of the commercial fishery may not participate in that commercial Tanner fishery [5 AAC 35.128(a)]. This prohibition does not apply to the operation of commercial shrimp or Dungeness crab pots [5 AAC 35.128 (b) & 5 AAC 34.128 (b)]. Fishermen are reminded to review gear storage requirements [5 AAC 35.127], and other pertinent regulations in the 2011-2012 Commercial King and Tanner Crab Fishing Regulations booklet available in all area offices. Regulations can also be viewed online at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishregulations.commercial>

Lost Pots

Reporting of lost pots, or pots left in a closed area in fishing condition should be directed to the Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT) offices in Juneau (465-4000) or Ketchikan (225-5118).

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
<i>ADFG</i>	225-5195	772-3801	874-3822	747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
<i>AWT</i>	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3255

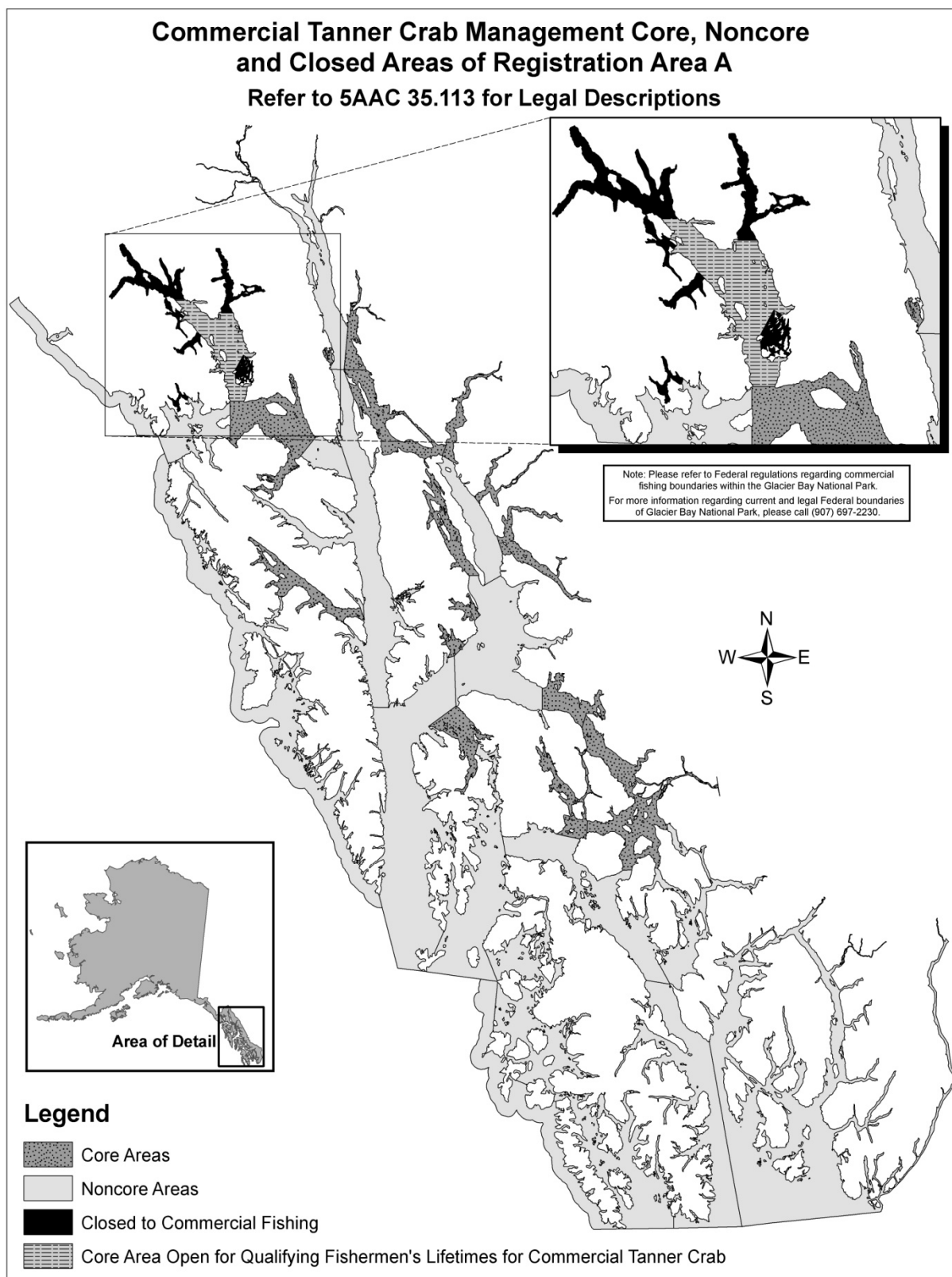


Figure 1: Management areas for the 2011/2012 Tanner crab commercial season in Southeast Alaska. This map is intended for general reference only. Please refer to text for legal descriptions of management area boundaries.